

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FOR UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS SHUM, AR
SUBJECT HARASSMENT OF MOTHERS GROUP

1. THE THURSDAY MOTHERS' OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO DEMONSTRATION ON JUNE 22 WAS MARKED BY HARASSMENT OF THE 300 MOTHERS REPORTEDLY DEMONSTRATING SILENTLY IN THE PLAZA. FOUR MOTHERS CALLED ON EMBASSY TODAY (6/23) TO REPORT THAT ONLOOKERS DISRUPTED THE WEEKLY DEMONSTRATION AND THAT THEY BELIEVED THAT A FEW MIDDLE-AGED MEN WHO LED A CROWD OF ABOUT 50 PERSONS IN CHANTS OF "AR-GEN-TINA" AND IN VERBAL HARASSMENT OF THE MOTHERS WERE MEMBERS OF THE ARGENTINE SECURITY SERVICES. THE MOTHERS SAID THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR MEMORY THERE WERE NO REPEAT NO UNIFORMED POLICEMEN IN THE PLAZA.

2. THE COUNTERDEMONSTRATION IN THE PLAZA WAS REPORTEDLY TRIGGERED BY THE PRESENCE OF A MAN WEARING AN ORANGE T-SHIRT WHO STATED, ACCORDING TO THE BA HEALD THAT HE HAD COME FROM HOLLAND TO "CONSLE THOSE WHO HAVE TEARS IN THEIR EYES" AS HE PRESENTED FLOWERS TO THE MOTHERS IN THE PLAZA. (HOLLAND WILL MEET ARGENTINA IN THE WORLD CUP FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS ON SUNDAY). ACCORDING TO THE MOTHERS' AND THE HERALD REPORT,
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SEVERAL WELL-DRESSED MEN IN THE CROWD BEGAN TO CHANT "AR-GEN-TINA" AND URGED OTHERS TO JOIN IN THE CHANTING. SEVERAL BUS LOADS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THEIR SCHOOL UNIFORMS APPEARED IN THE PLAZA WITH FLAGS AND JOINED IN THE CHANTING.

3. ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, SEVERAL MOTHERS FROM THE PLAZA DE MAYO GROUP VISITED EMBOFF TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN

REGARDING WHAT THE MOTHERS' GROUP BELIEVES IS A NEW GOVERNMENT TACTIC OF USING "PROVOCATEURS" TO HARASS THE MOTHERS DURING THEIR WEEKLY THURSDAY AFTERNOON DEMONSTRATIONS. THE MOTHERS SAID THAT THEY HAVE AGREED NOT TO RESPOND TO VERBAL PROVOCATIONS BUT TO MAINTAIN SILENCE DURING THEIR WEEKLY DEMONSTRATIONS. THE MOTHERS SAID THAT THEY ARE NOW EARING WHITE HANDKERCHIEFS ON THEIR HEAD SO THAT THEY CAN BE READILY IDENTIFIED. THEY ALSO STATED THAT THE IMPROMPTU MARCH DOWN THE CALLE FLORIDA PEDESTRIAN MALL ON JUNE 8 WAS A SPONTANEOUS EVENT AND WOULD NOT BE REPEATED "AS ONE DOES NOT DUPLICATE EVENTS WHICH OCCUR SPONTANEOUSLY."

4. THE MOTHERS' GROUP MEMBERS WHO HAVE SPOKEN TO THE EMBASSY APPEAR ENCOURAGED BY THE NUMBER OF CONTACTS THEY HAVE HAD WITH FOREIGN JOURNALISTS. THESE MOTHERS STATED THEY WER ESPECIALLY PLEASED WITH SUPPORT AND ATTENTION THAT THEIR GROUP WAS RECEIVING IN RECENT DEMONSTRATION OF SYMPATHY CONDUCTED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FRANCE. ONE STATED THAT THEIR DISTRESS WAS BEING ECHOED BY CONCERNED MOTHERS IN EUROPE AND THEY WOULD CONTINUE THEIR DEMONSTRATION TO PROTEST THE "RIVERBEDS OF DEA" (LECHOS DE MUERTOS) IN THE RIO DE LAS PLATA AND AT THE SAN ROCHE DAM. CASTRO

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